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An Answer to the most Important Question.

THREE SERMONS,

PREACHED

AT THE

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH,

IN *STORE-STREET*,

TOTTENHAM-COURT-ROAD,

LONDON,

May 20th and 27th, and June 3d, 1792=36.

By MANOAH SIBLY, N. H. S.

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1792.

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PREFACE.

IT may be thought by ſome an affront upon the good underſtanding of the chriſtian world, to addreſs them concerning the firſt principles of all religion; the natural mind being led to ſuppoſe, that, after upwards of ſeventeen hundred years' experience, there cannot now any thing new be offered upon the ſubject; the church having as early back as the beginning of the fourth century, when the Nicene council was held, in which the Athanaſian creed was framed, which is now received as orthodox throughout all chriſtendom, laid down, as an axiom, that there is a trinity of perſons in the Godhead, each whereof by himſelf and ſingly is God and Lord.

However well intended this definition of the doctrine of the Lord might be by it's compoſers, it being purpoſely ſo worded to ſtop the progreſs of the Arian hereſy

which even at that early period was ſpreading to ſuch an alarming extent, as to threaten the utter overturning of the church in the world; yet we are the living witneſſes of it's melancholy and poiſonous effects. For although this creed in ſome places ſpeaks the genuine truth concerning the Divinity of the Lord, and the unity of the Deity, yet in other places it perplexes the ſubject in ſetting forth a trinity of Gods; which has been the means of bringing the minds of thoſe who would attempt to analyſe and underſtand the ſubject into inextricable labyrinths, from which it cannot be relieved until men return to the worſhip practiſed in the pure primitive chriſtian ſtate, before that popiſh council poiſoned the fountain head; that is, until they worſhip Jeſus Chriſt as the Son of God; for herein conſiſted the benefit of the Lord's firſt advent.

If this is practiſed, it will be the means of leading them in the way to the New Jeruſalem diſpenſation, now commencing on the Lord's ſecond advent, when the light of

of heaven flowing into the mind, together with divine love, will enable them to ſee no God in heaven and the church but the Creator, the Redeemer, and Sanctifier of men, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom Iſaiah declares is the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father; and whoſoever thus directs his eye of faith to him, directs his worſhip, and views all ſupplies of grace and glory as coming immediately from his glorified body, whoſoever thus ſeeth and acknowledgeth Jeſus Chriſt, ſeeth and acknowledgeth the Father alſo; for his own words are, "I and my Father are one." Not one in any accommodated ſenſe whatever, but in the fulleſt ſcope of the word, one in operation, in eſſence, and in perſon.

That theſe diſcourſes may be the means of removing ſome of the Egyptian darkneſs, in which this moſt important of all ſubjects has ſo long been inveloped, and of introducing the minds of men into the glorious liberty of living truth, of which this is the primary, is the ſincere deſire of their humble ſervant in the Lord's New Church,

M. S.

BRITISH MUSEUM 31 DEC 57

M. S.

SERMON I.

EXOD. V. 2. Middle Clauſe,

"WHO IS THE LORD?"

OF all knowledges which it becometh man to attain, and the purſuit of which is moſt laudable, the knowledge of the Lord claims the higheſt eſteem, as the moſt important and uſeful that can occupy the human mind. It is alone from a true and genuine knowledge of the Lord that we become conjoined to him by faith and love. It is impoſſible, on the one hand, to believe and to truſt in any one, unleſs we have heard ſomething of his nature and the diſpoſition he poſſeſſes; and it is alſo equally impoſſible, on the other hand, to love a perſon of whom we have no knowledge, and with whom we have no acquaintance. And do we make the inquiry concerning the Lord, *who he is*, what is

his nature, his *attributes* and *perfections*? In his Word we have the inquiry reſolved, and that in ſuch a manner, ſo far as is uſeful to every man, that if he is a wayfaring traveller bound to Zion, though in the eyes of others he may be accounted a fool or a *madman*, he ſhall not err. All this may now be known of the Lord in his holy Word; we may there enter into the ſecret chambers of the Moſt High, and hold communion with the King of Glory. This privilege have the men of the New Church, who are all thoſe that keep his commandments, and are careful of having a conſcience void of offence towards God and man, of whatever name or denomination; with all ſuch the Lord in his Divine Humanity is ever preſent to lead them into all the myſteries of godlineſs, which are allowable for the intellectual faculties to enter, in the ſearch of truth divine, and of which we may ſafely ſay, the knowledge of the Lord is the firſt door; and wherein there are ſuch wonderful openings to the mind diſpoſed to receive the intuition, that the ſoul, as if loſt in the beatific viſion, is conſtrained to ſay at times,

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as the disciples did when they had a glimpse of his interior resplendent glory at his transfiguration, "It is good for us to be here." And this transfiguration which the disciples saw of the Lord upon the mount, was representative and significative of the glorious openings of divine truth, made known in part to the church, in consequence of our Lord's first advent; but now *more* gloriously opened in his second; and in each case agreeably accommodated to the recipient state of those who are willing subjects of the heat and light of heaven flowing from the only sun of righteousness, the Lord Jehovah Jesus; and which glorious displays of divine truth will be received more or less interiorly, as mankind are principled in true and genuine innocence, that is, in wisdom united to simplicity; and which state every man will progressively come into, as he advances by regeneration in the love of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his neighbour as himself.

What I have more particularly to observe from these words, in order to assist

our minds in coming to a concluſion on the queſtion propounded in my text, I mean to digeſt under the ſix following heads.—In anſwering this important inquiry, I propoſe in the firſt place, that the Lord is the Life.—Secondly, that he is the Uncreate.—Thirdly, that he is the Eternal.—Fourthly, that he is the Infinite.—Fifthly, that he is the Omnipotent.—Sixthly, and laſtly, that he is the Man.

In the firſt place, I would engage your attention whilſt I propoſe as an anſwer to my text, "Who is the Lord?" that he is the life; in other words, that it is *he* and *he alone* who lives; as a confirmation of which, we find ſo often in the Word, and eſpecially in the prophetical parts, that when the Lord wiſhed to enforce any thing from his mouth, he does it with *I* live, as in the 33d of Ezechiel, and 11th verſe: "I live,* ſaith the Lord, I deſire not the death of a ſinner, but would rather that he ſhould turn and live:" and ſo in many other inſtances; the

* Not *as I live*, as in our tranſlation; *as*, in this caſe, never being to be found in the original.

the Lord wiſhing his creatures to call to their remembrance, that *he* is *the life;* and this propoſition may afford us, amongſt others, the two following ideas:

Firſt, That all creatures, that the angels of heaven above, the devils of hell below, and the men upon earth, are only recipients of life from him; ſo that as the apoſtle truly aſſerts, it is in him we live and move and have our being, that we are momentarily ſupported in natural and in ſpiritual life, that is, the life of the body and the life of the ſoul, by his upholding hand; and this we may learn from the formation of man in the firſt chapter of Geneſis; (taking the words in their natural view;) the clay of which man was formed, was as to itſelf inert, lifeleſs, and dead; and in order to introduce life therein, after the recipient veſſels were formed, the *I live*, the Lord, who is the Jehovah in my text, breathed into man the breath of lives, and man became a living ſoul; he breathed into the veſſels ſuch a ſpark of life from himſelf, as was adapted to their capacity of reception;

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and this not only as to the ſenſual life, (the life of the body,) but alſo as to the ſuper-ſenſual life, (the life of the ſpirit); and therefore man from thence neceſſarily becomes eternal; for whilſt the Deity endures, life cannot ceaſe to flow to his creatures, agreeable to it's primary order. It is true, man may pervert this life of God in his ſoul, and thus abuſe the goodneſs of God, who wiſhes as the ultimatum of all his deſigns, that man might become a creature after his own image, and his own likeneſs; and thus be capacitated to enjoy the celeſtial delights provided by the King of heaven, reſulting from conjunction with him. But then we are carefully to obſerve, that this perverſion is not from the Lord, it is not from the fountain of life, for from life's fountain nothing but life can ever flow. The Lord ſays in his Word, "Can a fountain ſend forth ſweet waters and bitter?" Can one fountain do this? It is impoſſible, and thus it is equally impoſſible for the fountain of life and light to cauſe men to come into death and darkneſs: which is the ſecond idea which I would call your

attention

attention to, from the propoſition "that *the Lord is the life.*" He is the fountain that ſends forth the ſweet waters of life, and cannot ſend forth the bitter waters of death: he is declared in the Word to be the fountain of the waters of life, unto whom whoſoever will may come, and take freely, without money and without price: he is the fountain opened for the houſe of David, and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, that (inſtead of cauſing) cleanſes from ſin and from uncleanneſs.

But before I diſmiſs this part of my ſubject, it may be neceſſary to remove two objections that may ariſe in ſome minds, to whom ſome of the aſſertions already laid down, may appear a new doctrine; but however new it may appear, I judge it is agreeable to the Word, and ſound reaſon. The firſt objection I allude to, is, that it may be ſaid, if we are to judge from appearances, it would ſeem as if man having life inſtilled in him at his firſt creation or birth, from that period lives from that firſt life in himſelf. But this is a fallacy ariſing

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only from appearances, and from not knowing, or at leaſt not conſidering, that every effect muſt have it's cauſe, until the cauſe returns to the original cauſe of all cauſes, the Lord himſelf. If we contemplate any ſubject whatever, according to appearances, we then only judge from the effect, from which we ſhall never trace the cauſe, nor ſee the genuine truth of the matter. In this caſe we ſhall always judge fallaciouſly, and not give righteous judgment; for would we judge of any matter in a proper manner, we muſt firſt ſeek the cauſe, view from that, and then we ſhall be more likely to judge rightly of the effect. And if we proceed in examining the preſent point from this ſource, we ſhall find that the grand cauſe of all why we live, is, becauſe the Lord is THE LIFE. Life for ever flows from him to the immediate ſupport of all his creatures; for were it poſſible for him to with-hold his influx of life, which it is impoſſible for him to do, becauſe he is nothing but life in himſelf, annihilation muſt inevitably take place as to the workmanſhip of his hands. But as this cannot

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be the caſe, and the Divinity and Divine Humanity are united in the one perſon of the Lord God and Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt; and as our Lord ſays, that as the Father has life in himſelf, ſo alſo has he given to the Son to have life in himſelf; that is, by the union of Divinity with Humanity, the Divine Humanity became the ſame life with the Divinity, both being conjoined in one perſon; therefore our Lord told his diſciples, "Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo." Doubtleſs this was a moſt ſeaſonable declaration and promiſe, adapted, even in the letter of the Word, to the ſtate of thoſe to whom it was ſpoken. The Jewiſh church at that time, (and I wiſh I could ſay it was not the ſame with the Chriſtian church at preſent,) having no ſolid foundation to build their hopes of immortality upon, oppreſſed with doubts and anxious fears, as to the ſtate of man after death, whether the ſoul and body died together; or, whether the ſoul and body ſeparated, and the former lived as a man to all eternity. That this was the caſe with the Jewiſh church, and that they entertained

doubts reſpecting the doctrine of reſurrection unto life, is well known; and that many ſimple-minded Chriſtians at this day are in the ſame predicament, experience teſtifies: and it appears, as if directly to aſſuage theſe doubts, and to bring the mind into a ſtate of abſolute certainty concerning this matter, that our Lord made the declaration juſt cited. It is as much as if the Lord had ſaid to his diſciples, 'Do ye really believe that my Humanity is Divine, and that conſequently I have life in myſelf? And at the ſame time are ye willing to acknowledge, that you continually receive your life by influx from me? If ye are come ſo far, then reflect that nothing but love, and goodwill towards all my creatures, ever can fill my divine breaſt, the perfection of which conſiſts in loving them out of and from myſelf; and as your ſoul or internal man, into which my life freely flows for your ſupport, is an eternal recipient of life, you may reſt aſſured, that becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.'

I will now ſpeak to another objection

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that may ariſe, concerning the Lord being nothing but life, conſequently light and love. It may be ſuppoſed from hence, that the ſcripture contradicts itſelf, whilſt the mind may recur to ſuch paſſages as theſe; as where it is ſaid, "I form light, and I create darkneſs." "Is there evil in the city, and the Lord has not done it?" and many more to the ſame purport. And let it be obſerved, in order to reconcile theſe and many more paſſages, with others in the Word, where in the literal ſenſe it ſpeaks directly the reverſe, we muſt conſider that the Lord in his Word is propoſing himſelf, his mercy and grace to *different* characters of men, and this he does in different places of the ſame Word; and as he cannot but wiſh to draw *all* men to heaven, he has ſo accommodated himſelf in his Word, that *all* may receive the benefit and advantage according to their ſtate, in order to enter upon and proceed in the new and ſpiritual life. And therefore, we find the ultimate ſenſe of the Word, for the moſt part (however the internal may differ,) accommodated to the ſtate of the ſenſual and

natural man; and whilſt man is in this ſtate, and is ſelfiſh and worldly *beyond meaſure*, the Lord has graciouſly provided, that many parts of the Word ſhall appear to be in concord with that ſtate; and this is permitted, that the man may be kept from ſeeing the genuine truths of the Word in thoſe paſſages where they are expoſed naked and plain; and hereby he is kept from bringing himſelf into greater condemnation, by ſeeing the truth, and not walking agreeable thereto; and at the ſame time, by theſe appearances being in the letter ſuch as I have quoted, there is not the leaſt harm done to the regenerate man, to the man who is born of God, born of water and of the ſpirit, which are the truths and goods as contained in the internal of the Word; for to ſuch, the external appears thrown off whilſt he enters with his heart and ſoul into the holy of holies, the dazzling luſtre of the jewels quite eclipſing the caſe which holds them, as the ſun in it's meridian ſplendor abſorbs the ſmall light of a taper.

I come now to the ſecond thing propoſed, in order to aſſiſt our inquiry, "*Who is the Lord;*" and anſwer, that he is the uncreate, that is, he has not only life in himſelf, but he likewiſe exiſts in himſelf; and as he is the life, both as to his Divinity and glorified Humanity, and which center in the perſon of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as ſoul and body, ſo alſo he is the uncreate; and he is the uncreate, becauſe, although the Lord, as the life himſelf, can create images and veſſels to receive himſelf according to his various ſtages of accommodation, ſtill he cannot create life, and cannot create himſelf. There is nothing that can be created, but what exiſts from another; and if we ſuppoſe life to exiſt from another, it is evident that that life from which it exiſts, would ſtill be the real life and the life in himſelf. And if this cauſe of life was not life in himſelf, he muſt either derive it from *another*, or *from himſelf*; and it carries an abſurdity upon the face of it, to ſpeak of life being derived *from* himſelf, becauſe, to ſpeak of a thing being derived from itſelf ſuppoſes a firſt riſe or ſpring; and in this caſe

caſe the ſource would be from nothing, and from nothing nothing can ſpring.

This firſt cauſe which is in himſelf, and from which all things were created, is the Lord, who from his eſſe in himſelf is called Jehovah throughout the Word of the Old Teſtament, and is the word rendered Lord in my text; and that he muſt conſequently be the uncreate, may be illuſtrated by reaſon; for whoever only conſiders that the creator muſt be prior to the creature, muſt feel the truth; and however high the mind may trace the ſubject, ſtill at the end of the boundary, it muſt reſt in an uncreated object, who muſt in reality be the creator of all things, as the firſt cauſe, however he may operate by ſecondary inſtruments or means.

That the Lord is the uncreate, may be farther evinced by the things that are created. Which amongſt them all of themſelves can produce any thing that poſſeſſes life? The creatures may deſtroy life, but even man himſelf cannot create it; and

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the reaſon is, becauſe he himſelf is a created ſubject. He receives what he poſſeſſes from the creator, and conſequently, upon the whole, it is only drawing a juſt inference, that the creator of all things is the uncreate. And it may be alſo obſerved, that he is the uncreated life, becauſe nothing *is*, unleſs it alſo *exiſts*; hence in the Lord the eſſe and the exiſtere are one, for whilſt God IS, he EXISTS, and whilſt he EXISTS, he IS. This is the life which is God, and this alſo is the life which is man and all creation; for, as was obſerved, it is impoſſible that life ſhould be created. Life may create images and likeneſſes of himſelf, which may be it's containing veſſels; but he cannot create himſelf; if he could, every man would be a Deity. The truth of the matter is this; the Deity poſſeſſes his own uncreated life in himſelf, and that life, if conſidered in it's proceeding, is the ſame which man and all creation poſſeſs, and they enjoy it as their own; but the rational men among them acknowledge it to be received from the firſt fountain.

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That all things are from the Lord, who is the uncreated life, may be farther illuſtrated from this conſideration, that it is the life in man from the Lord that conſtitutes him a man; and whether the man is ſenſual or natural, rational, ſpiritual, or celeſtial, it is the ſame; the man in whom theſe lives are, being only the recipient veſſel. Thus from hence we may know all things are created and proceed from the uncreated life, which is God the Lord; and that conſequently the Lord is uncreate, both as to his Divinity, and Divine or Glorified Humanity. And that what has been ſaid concerning the Lord Jehovah, as the uncreated life, is truly applicable, and only ſo of him in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, may be evident from this one ſingle declaration of John in his firſt chapter, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word; he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, and the Word was made fleſh." It is plain from this paſſage, that it was the great Jehovah,

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the uncreate, the creator of all things, that came into the world and was made flesh; and on the consideration of which, well might the apostle say, the second Adam was (not the second person in the trinity, for Deity or uncreated life can never be divided into persons or offices: no; the apostle declares the open truth without shame or fear) the Lord from heaven, it was the true God and eternal life manifested in flesh.

From what has been already advanced, in order to assist our inquiry concerning the Lord, that he is the life and the uncreate, and that all creatures receive life from him, whether it may be natural or spiritual, let us not forget to include ourselves in the subject; we are all recipients as to our natural lives, and we *may* all be recipients of him as to our spiritual life, will we but use the natural. Let this truth be deeply impressed on our minds, that the Lord is no hard task-master; he never gathers where he has not strawed, nor reaps where he has not sown. We are all

born natural men, for as ſuch we come into the world; and we may all become ſpiritual, will we but uſe the powers we have, in avoiding the evils of the day. And we ſhould remember, if we do not this, if we improve not the talent, if we apply not our powers to the uſe for which they were given, but make a covenant with hell and ſin, if we *will* follow our own ſelfiſh and worldly purſuits, be they whatever they may, and however pleaſing in our own eyes, we then abuſe our natural life, we put it not to the uſe which God deſigned, and conſequently if we repent not before we leave the body, our preſent natural talent will be taken from us, and we take our lot amongſt other ſuch unprofitable ſervants, in that ſtate where will be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. Let us not forget, that though we are recipients of life every moment from the Lord, ſtill we are created ſomething more than machines, or mere ſtatues; we are upheld continually in a free will, which is the very eſſe or *being* of our life; and we are ſupported in this, that we may act and think as of ourſelves, and thereby enjoy

joy the delights of life. Were not this the caſe, none of the delights, pleaſures, and ſatisfactions ariſing from the enjoyment even of natural life, would be perceived by us, much leſs the enjoyment of ſpiritual and eternal life. We know that no delight could accrue to any thing only operated upon by another, however the operator may be pleaſed. The Lord has created man to enjoy everlaſting bliſs, and for this end, graciouſly indulges him, as a parent may indulge his tender offspring, in order that it may feel a pleaſure agreeing to it's childlike ſtate of life; for the parent delights to act for the babe in ſuch a manner, as may permit the babe to judge he has done the thing itſelf, which without the parent's hand, however unſeen by the infant, would have been impoſſible to have been performed; and thus the child, from the appearance of acting of himſelf, enjoys the delights of life; and it is the higheſt pleaſure of a parent to ſee it. And when it's expanding mind is able to judge for itſelf, if it could have remembered the tranſaction, it would then acknowledge it was the

 parent's

parent's hand that did it, and the child did it only *as of himſelf*.

Juſt ſo is the caſe between the Lord and man; the Lord in reality does all, becauſe he alone is life, and whatever man has, he receives from him; and as all creation are undoubtedly his children, he like a tender parent ſuffers mankind to act as if they acted themſelves, and continually upholds them in this ſtate, in order that they may appropriate good or evil, heaven or hell to themſelves, and thus make up their own life, and enjoy it's delights. And he inſtructs us from his Word; and it becomes us to learn from thence, that without him we can do nothing, and that a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven; and that conſequently it becomes us after all, to acknowledge ourſelves unprofitable ſervants, and to aſcribe to his name the praiſe for ever. And when the man ſees it thus, and gives all glory to the Lord, he experiences incomparable delight, he rejoices with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory, the delights of heaven,

peace

peace and tranquillity thence poſſeſs his breaſt, for he is conjoined to the Lord.

Now to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

SERMON

SERMON II.

EXOD. V. 2. Middle Clauſe.

"WHO IS THE LORD?"

IN order that we may form uſeful ideas to ourſelves of the Lord, there are moſt certainly theſe two things requiſite, namely, that they ſhould be ſo exalted of him, as to excite our praiſe and our adoration, and likewiſe attempered with that conſideration of the propinquity of the Deity to us, that we in no wiſe conceive conjunction with him impracticable. With a view to both theſe ideas, we place the inquiry before us, as laid down in my text, upon the following ſcale, and propoſe anſwering the queſtion, Who is the Lord? by ſaying in the firſt place, that he is the Life.—Secondly, that he is the Uncreate.—Thirdly, that he is the Eternal.—Fourthly, that he

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is the Infinite.—Fifthly and laſtly, that he is the Man.

With reſpect to the firſt and ſecond of theſe, namely, that he is the life, and that as ſuch he is the uncreate, we have already conſidered; and waving any repetition of what has been ſaid on theſe two articles, I come to the third thing propounded, as an anſwer to the query in my text, namely, *that the Lord is the eternal;* and to prove this propoſition, we may obſerve, the Lord is eternal becauſe he is the uncreate, and alſo becauſe the life which is God, is not life *from* himſelf, nor life from *nothing*, but life *in himſelf*, and thus without any beginning, and that which is without any beginning, is from eternity, and conſequently is the ETERNAL. I know it is a hard taſk for mankind, whilſt they have their minds confined down to natural and material things, to have a clear idea of any thing without a beginning, and conſequently to have an idea of God from eternity, and as the eternal; but were the minds of men elevated to ſpiritual things, and would they uſe themſelves to think abſtractedly

abſtractedly from time, they might then ſee ſomewhat into the real truth; and it might in this caſe be manifeſted to their minds, that God is the eternal. For in regard to the man who is unregenerate, whoſe life alone is centered in natural delights and purſuits, ſome ſelfiſh or worldly principle is at the bottom; and theſe pull down the man from ſpiritual objects, they abſorb his underſtanding as to the nature of divine things, they darken his eyes that he cannot ſee the truths of heaven; nor is it poſſible for him to have any thought abſtracted from the idea of time, and this he inherits from the nature in which he is; and as he cannot do this in regard to thinking of any ſubject without having regard to time, ſo no more can he abſtract from his thoughts the idea of a firſt riſe; and the firſt riſe to ſuch a man is beginning in time, and it is the appearance of the progreſſion of the natural ſun whereby are cauſed day and night, ſummer and winter, and likewiſe ſmaller proportions of time, as hours and minutes, that impreſſes this idea of time in every thought of the natural man, and

conſequently

conſequently into the thought of every man as born into the world; for every man comes into the world natural, and to become ſpiritual, he muſt be born again; and as he is born again, and the life of God is kindled in the will as love, and in the underſtanding as wiſdom, ſo is he capacitated to think ſpiritually of the Lord and of divine things, or in other words, to think abſtractedly from material things; and the reaſon is, that in ſuch a mind a ſuperior degree is opened than in his natural mind; and therefore, inſtead of time, when thinking of heavenly objects, he can think of a ſtate of life, and inſtead of a duration of of time, as years, months, weeks, &c. he is led to the idea of the ſtate of thought from the affection which makes the life.

A ſpiritual idea of the Lord from eternity, viz. an idea abſtracted from time, does not draw any thing from a firſt riſe, or from a beginning; but it thinks from the ſtate of the Deity, that he is the eternal; ſo that all that which is God, and all that which proceeds from God, is eternal, that is, it is

divine in itſelf, for this is the ſtate of the Deity; and if we can thus enter into the underſtanding of the ſubject, and if we could once fix our ideas upon ſtate, when we conſider the nature of the Lord, and if we could alſo conſider what that ſtate is, namely, love out of and from itſelf in the very abſtract, and that the Deity is this love, becauſe he is life in himſelf, we might then eaſily ſee that he is but one *eternal* burſting forth of love and life, that he is the unchangeable I AM, becauſe the paſt, the preſent, and the future, is the ſame with him. And therefore, well might the prophet declare to the church under her various temptations here below, "The *eternal God* is thy refuge, and underneath are his *everlaſting* arms." It is impoſſible he can be loving to-day, and angry to-morrow: it is impoſſible he can look at one man with a ſmile, and at another with a frown. No, *from eternity to eternity* he is the ſame; his years, that is, his ſtate, (for it is impoſſible years can be predicated of the Lord,) know no change; he is loving to every man, and whatever changes may appear in the Lord,

they

they in reality are all in the creature, each heart being a mirror reflecting the light and heat of heaven's ſun, according to the various loves and affections in which his life is principled.

Alſo from this we may clearly ſee, that it was in alluſion to the eternal ſtate of the Divine in himſelf, that our Lord ſaid to his diſciples, John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I am;" and alſo when he told them, "That no one has aſcended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven;" for the Divine ever exiſted in himſelf as the eternal, and in this point of view there was no alteration as to his ſtate; for although Jehovah was manifeſted in the fleſh, ſtill the ſame Divine, which was the life and ſoul of the Humanity, held the government of the heavens in his hands; for the Divine in himſelf being alſo life in himſelf, and alſo eternal and infinite, cannot be circumſcribed by time nor ſpace; it wants not the ſubterfuge of dividing the Godhead into perſons or into ſeparate offices, to ac-

count for the Divine at once holding the government of heaven, earth, and hell in his hands; and when the fullneſs of time was come for to empty himſelf, and to come into the ultimates of his own creation, and thus dwell amongſt men in this lower world of our's, and ſo repair the link which man had broken, and unite himſelf more cloſely with his creatures, that the Divine might again come down to man, and man aſcend to God: and this might be ſufficiently comprehended ſo as to acknowledge the truth, could we but diveſt ourſelves of the ideas of time and ſpace. The Divine can be but one, and the appearances of time and ſpace are nothing with him; for even a thouſand years in his ſight are as one day, and one day as a thouſand years. Hence the Lord, as well as the *eternal*, is alſo the *infinite*; and therefore, while he was here below, without any diſparagement to the unity of his Divinity, could be at the ſame time in heaven, there being no ſuch thing as ſpace with regard to him, any more than time; which brings me to the

Fourth thing propoſed, that *the Lord is the infinite.* And we may ſay, that the Lord is the infinite becauſe he is the eternal; for as time and ſpace are the two things proper to nature, and predicated of natural things, ſo eternal and infinite correſpond to them, and are predicated of ſpiritual and divine things, and conſequently are predicated of God; and under this idea we find our Lord ſays in John iv. 24, "God is a ſpirit, and they that worſhip him muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth;" that is, muſt worſhip him according to what he hath revealed himſelf to be in the Word, abſtracted from natural and material conceptions. We are too much tied down here, in conſequence of our natural and ſenſual origin; and as from this circumſtance which we inherit from nature, we take up natural ideas of the Lord as the *eternal*, ſo alſo we entertain natural ideas of the Lord as the *infinite.* For with reſpect to the natural idea of *eternity*, it is conſidered from time; but the ſpiritual idea is not from time: ſo alſo the natural idea we have of *infinity* is from ſpace; but the ſpiritual idea is not from ſpace; for as nature and all natural

things

things are not life, only veſſels for the reception of life, ſo thoſe two eſſentials of nature, *time* and *ſpace*, are not of life, but are from the life which God created with nature; and therefore neither *ſpace* nor *time* ought to enter into the idea of the *eternity* and *infinity* of God.

The common natural idea of the infinity of the Lord when conſidered from ſpace, is, that he fills the univerſe from one end to the other; but was this idea of the infinity of the Lord to be examined, there would be found lurking within it the principle that the inmoſt of nature is God; thus that it is in an extenſion, and it being underſtood that all extenſion is of matter, hence we find ſo many, eſpecially of the wiſe men of the day, confirming themſelves in the idea that all beings and creatures exiſt from matter and ſpirit united, and conclude that they cannot exiſt ſeparate; from whence has been introduced into the mind of many, a denial of a future ſtate, a denial of a life after death: and this has ariſen in conſequence of it not being aſcertained that ſpirit and matter are two diſtinct things,

things, as a ſhell and a kernel, as a houſe and the inhabitant who lives in it, ſpirit and matter only making one by correſpondence, conſequently ſpirit does not in the leaſt depend upon matter for it's ſole exiſtence: but at the ſame time it ſhould be remarked, that matter does depend upon ſpirit; for although matter in no caſe can exiſt without ſpirit, yet under certain circumſtances, ſpirit may exiſt without matter. Who will ſay, that God depends upon the material world for his exiſtence? Who will ſay, the creator depends upon his creatures? No more with propriety can it be ſaid, that ſpirit depends upon matter. Away then with ſuch falſe philoſophy, which robs mankind of the brighteſt jewel they inherit, namely, the certainty of a future ſtate; and at the ſame time, the certainty of exiſting as men and women to all eternity, according to the paſt life here.

The natural idea of infinity does not in any ſhape agree with the idea of life, and with the idea of wiſdom and love, which is God. Infinity, to be properly ſeen, ſhould be

be viewed from a ſpiritual idea, in which there is nothing of time nor place, and that becauſe in it there is nothing of nature. Time and ſpace are only proper to nature, and in the ſpiritual world are only appearances according to the ſtate of the affections and thoughts; ſpace and diſtance there are nothing but as thought and affections are diſtant; and that we may know even in the body; for inſtance, will not affection bring the beloved object directly in our ſight, although it may be an hundred miles diſtant as to ſpace? Does not thought bring things preſent to the eye of the mind, that were tranſacted ages ago, as if they were acted to-day? And as the ſpiritual life, or the life after death, is nothing but a life agreeable to the affections and thoughts, as theſe make the appearance of the place, and conſtitute the appearance of the time, ſo conſequently in ſpiritual ideas, can be neither time nor ſpace; but thoſe are ideas which we inherit from nature, and which conſequently, when the natural man is put off, are put off likewiſe; and

and this may be done in part by regeneration, and totally after death.

If we were to think ſpiritually of infinity, and of God as the infinite, we ſhould then think that divine love is infinite, and that divine wiſdom is alſo infinite; and as divine love and divine wiſdom are the life which is God, therefore the divine life is alſo infinite; and thus as a neceſſary conſequence, as that life centers in the Lord as the grand reſervoir, it follows, that he alſo is infinite. Angels and men, as to themſelves, are recipients of infinite love and wiſdom from the Lord, and however the caſe appears, it is not their own; it is adapted to their finite capacities, for they are nothing but forms receptive of life; but then we are to obſerve, theſe forms are from matter and ſubſtances which are without life, and in themſelves are dead; and as between the dead and the living there cannot be made any compariſon or true ſimilarity, ſo can there be given no *ratio* between infinite and finite. The higheſt degree of wiſdom the creature is able

to attain to, is, to ſee and to acknowledge the truths of heaven in the light of infinite wiſdom, and to be affected with the goods of heaven in the heat of infinite love.

And how the finite creature is adapted to receive infinity, may in ſome meaſure be illuſtrated from the light and heat of the ſun of the natural world. The light and heat of that ſun are not material, but ſtill we know they affect material ſubſtances, the light modifying them, and the heat changing their ſtate; and this may ſerve as a repreſentation, for the divine wiſdom of the Lord is light, and the divine love of the Lord is heat; but they are ſpiritual light and ſpiritual heat, becauſe they proceed from the Lord as the ſun of the ſpiritual world, which ſun is divine love, and at the ſame time divine wiſdom. But the light of this world, as alſo it's heat, are natural, and not ſpiritual; but are the receptives of ſpiritual heat and light; for that ſun is fire, and not love. All love and life proceeds immediately from the Lord, and as ſuch he is the uncreate, as

ſuch he is the eternal, and as ſuch he is the infinite.

And that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the divine perſon, who as well as the uncreate and the eternal is alſo the infinite, is, becauſe he has life in himſelf, and he is the ſun of heaven, from whoſe radiant and ſpreading beams all infinity of love, wiſdom, and life alone can flow. That he is the ſun of heaven, may be proved from Malachi iv. 2; who ſpeaking of him coming to ſalvation and redemption, ſays, "That to you that fear my name ſhall the ſun of righteouſneſs ariſe with healing in his wings." That this paſſage alone alludes to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is well known, and conſequently muſt be ſpoken of him as the ſun of heaven who ſhould ſhine forth in all his infinite fullneſs, glory, and power, to enlighten the dark underſtanding, and warm the frozen heart. Iſaiah alſo proves the ſame in his 30th chap. and 26th verſe: ſpeaking of the glory of infinite love and wiſdom, as ſhining forth from the divine and human united in the perſon of Jehovah

Jeſus, he ſays, "The light of the moon ſhall be as the light of the ſun, and the light of the ſun ſhall be ſeven-fold as the light of ſeven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their wound;" that is, when the Lord ſhould come and effect redemption, whereby the ſpiritual and celeſtial kingdoms of the Lord in heaven above, and in the church below, and at the ſame time the ſpiritual and celeſtial principles in man, namely, his will and his underſtanding, were capable of receiving greater light and heat; and therefore he came to eſtabliſh the light of the ſpiritual moon, and confirm the heat of the celeſtial ſun, that the ſun of divine love might no more go down, nor the moon of divine wiſdom withdraw it's ſhining, ſo as no more to threaten the deſtruction of the creation without a remedy always at hand; but that ſo far as infinite can be adapted to finite capacities, ſo far as life can be accommodated to it's recipiencies, man may receive heaven's light and love, and be conjoined to God, might go on from grace to grace, might

range

range through the heavenly ſcenes, and ſtill be entertained with new delights, ſtill be occupied with contemplating and enjoying the boundleſs pleaſures which eternity and infinity can preſent to his view.

On theſe views what a noble creature is man! for what grand purpoſes was he made! Surely not to grovel here below, and fix his abode on natural and ſenſual delights; ſurely not to confine himſelf to the things of nature, as exiſting in time and ſpace; but that when he caſts his eyes around him, and views the wonders of time and ſpace opening in the marvellous beauties of the natural creation, he might look through time to the eternal, and through ſpace to the infinite, and thus to infinity and eternity: for what is the longeſt ſtretch of human arithmetic as to the numeration of years, when compared to eternity, much leſs the ſhort ſpace of three-ſcore years and ten; which, when time is done with, and the eternal ſtate commences, can appear but as a dream that paſſeth away. Man, as to his natural life, may be compared

to

to a flower that ſprings up in the morning, is in full bloom at noon, and at night withered and gone. But let us remember, though this is the caſe with the material man, which is put off by death; though this is the comparative ſtate of the man, in regard to his life in this world, and his eternal ſtate hereafter; yet let us remember that as we depart out of this world principled as to our love and life, ſo ſhall the eternal ſtate receive us in that life, where yeſterday, to-day, and to morrow, is the ſame: hence let us not forget, now is the acceptable time, to-day is the day of ſalvation; and whilſt we are in this world is our ſtate of probation, and as we make up our life here, ſuch will it continue for ever; and as we, when we leave this material body of fleſh and blood, never more to reaſſume it, enter upon our eternal ſtate, ſo alſo at the ſame time, according to our eternal ſtate, we enter upon the infinite, that is, ſo far as infinite is accommodated to our finite frame, and we prepared to receive it. Then the beauties of heaven, if we are regenerated, will open to our aſtoniſhed view,

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with all it's infinite variety, and with all it's infinite delights, in that manſion of bliſs which is prepared for all that love God and keep his commandments; and then the pleaſures, the delights, and ſatisfactions thence reſulting, will continue without fear of cloying the appetite; for they will be ever new, they will be infinite as well as eternal, becauſe they flow from an infinite and eternal ſource of love and wiſdom.

I conclude with adviſing us one and all to examine ourſelves, whether we are giving to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt the glory due to his great name, or whether on the other hand, we are detracting from his perſon, his character, and his honour, and paſſing him by as not altogether the *grand* and *only* object of worſhip, and viewing him as ſomething leſs than the infinite and the eternal, ſuppoſing him to be in ſome ſhape or other inferior to Jehovah; for upon a right knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord depends our ſtate of wiſdom in divine and heavenly things, and

conſequently our ſtate of love; for love and wiſdom go hand and hand in the interior of the ſoul. Wiſdom or truth is no farther acknowledged with the heart, and received into the mind, than the man loves and feels delight therein. Our Lord alludes to this when he ſays, "Unleſs ye believe that I AM, ye ſhall die in your ſins, and where I am ye cannot come."

There are two eſſentials of religion, the one is truth, and the other is good; and in the doctrine of the Lord theſe make one; for as ſoon as ever a man from the heart acknowledges the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as the only father of heaven, as ſoon as ever he receives the truth that he is the infinite and eternal I AM, truth then is conjoined to the good which was the ground for it's reception, and at the ſame time receives from truth it's exaltation from natural to ſpiritual. This in reality, and nothing elſe, is the new birth; and this truth cannot be received, unleſs the man has prepared the ground by ſhunning evils; and therefore our Lord ſays, "If ye believe not that I AM,"

AM," or in other words, if ye do not acknowledge the Divinity to be in my Humanity, and that the Father and Son are united in my divine perſon as ſoul and body, what is the cauſe? Ye are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; and if ye continue in that ſtate living and dying, ye will ever remain ſo; "ye ſhall die in your ſins, and where I am ye cannot come."

It might not be unuſeful for ſuch an heart as finds a repugnance within his breaſt to the believing of this firſt and fundamental truth of heaven, that Jeſus Chriſt is God alone, and beſides him there is none other in heaven, and in the church, to examine himſelf, to ſearch into his heart and his life, and ſee if he is not encouraging ſome evil love grounded in the love of his own *proprium*, either as to ſelf or the world; and if it manifeſts itſelf no farther than by raiſing prejudices in his mind, this will make him cool with reſpect to the truths of heaven; and therefore, where the Lord, the eternal and infinite I AM, is, he cannot come, his love manifeſted in

his prejudices being oppoſite to the ſtate needful for the reception of this truth, they cannot aſſociate; for as to ſpirit, it is the like love and the like thoughts that bring near, and the diſſimilarity of love and the thoughts thence that disjoin.—Let us then be careful how we indulge ourſelves in our own ways and works, for they moſt aſſuredly blind the eyes of the internal mind from the reception of eternal love, and at the ſame time from the reception of truths flowing from infinite wiſdom.

Now to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

SERMON

SERMON III.

EXOD. V. 2. Middle Clauſe.

"WHO IS THE LORD?"

IN the two preceding diſcourſes on theſe words, I propoſed to anſwer the important queſtion in my text according to the following order.

Firſt, that the Lord is the Life.—Secondly, that he is the Uncreate.—Thirdly, that he is the Eternal.—Fourthly, that he is the Infinite.—Fifthly, that he is the Omnipotent; and laſtly, that he is the Man.

The four firſt of theſe general heads have been ſpoken to, namely, that the Jehovah

of whom my text inquires, is the life, the uncreate, the eternal, and the infinite; and it has been alſo proved that theſe attributes of Deity meet and center in the perſon of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt alone, ſince Jehovah's aſſumption of Humanity in the virgin's womb; and that conſequently whatever of life in himſelf, whatever of uncreated, eternal, and infinite qualities are attributed to Jehovah in the Old Teſtament, they are equally to be attributed to Jeſus in the New; becauſe he is that divine perſon, and that divine perſon alone, in whom all the fullneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily.

I am now to call your attention to the fifth propoſition, *That the Lord is the Omnipotent;* and the Lord is omnipotent becauſe he is infinite; for omnipotence is infinite power: and in the work of creation, and the work of redemption and regeneration, we may moſt evidently view the omnipotence of God.

With regard to the work of creation, who

who can take a ſurvey, even though it be but a contracted one, of the heavens over our heads, and the habitable world under our feet, and view the harmony and the dependence one part has on another, the whole exiſting from the parts, and the parts ſubſiſting from the whole, and not from hence ſee the greatneſs and glory of an omnipotent God? David, when contemplating the ſubject, ſeems loſt in amazement, when he ſays, "When I conſider the heavens, the moon, and the ſtars, which thou haſt ordained, Lord what is man! Why, let him conſult his own frame, and behold in that the epitomy of the whole; and then with aſtoniſhed view of the omnipotence of God, which a good man cannot help having in his eye whilſt in the contemplation of his works, he may again ſay with the Pſalmiſt, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made;" and the reaſon he tells us, is becauſe omnipotence is guided by infinite love and wiſdom, and nothing is done at random. "In his book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them."

them." As I farther proceed in the elucidation of this preſent ſubject, I ſhall have occaſion to call your attention to ſome things which will open the ſpiritual ſenſe of this laſt paſſage of ſcripture.

And now let us aſcend higher and deſcend deeper than our ſenſes will ſtretch; and bleſſed be the Lord, he has now at the conſummation of the age made his ſecond advent, and manifeſted the hidden myſteries of ages; he has opened to our wondering eyes the book of his omnipotence in heaven above, and hell beneath; and in the heavens *above*, or *within* our heavens, the omnipotence of God ſhines forth with amazing ſplendor, for *there* are ſeen ſtupendous teſtimonies of the divine omnipotence; into that world come all the men that have died ſince the firſt creation, and who, as in this world, are equally men as to form and ſhape, although at the ſame time they are ſpirits as to their eſſence, and their eſſence is their affections, their loves, and their thoughts thence; conſequently the angels, who are the ſpirits of heaven,

heaven, from love and affection to what is good and true, are ſuch, becauſe they poſſeſs that affection; and the devils, who are the ſpirits of hell, from the affection of what is evil and falſe, are ſuch, becauſe they are in thoſe affections. The angels or the ſpirits of heaven poſſeſſing the good affections, dwell in the place which in the Word is called heaven, and they dwell there becauſe they are in the enjoyment of the Lord's life of goodneſs and truth, and they are in that affection, conſequently the place or ſtate of heaven to them is without becauſe it is within; for in all heavenly order the external muſt flow from and be formed by the internal, and which indeed, if heaven was not *within* in their love and affection, would be no heaven at all to them; they would be loſt to all the magnificence, ſplendor, and glory reſulting from the radiant beams of heaven's ſun, as well as to the delights of innocence reſulting from an affection to love and wiſdom. Thoſe that have it not within, poſſeſs the affections of what is evil, and ſuch dying in their ſins and iniquities, where heaven is,

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that is, into the life of goodneſs and truth, they cannot come, becauſe their affections are oppoſite; conſequently they depart to the deep below, where they aſſociate with companions like themſelves, and pervert all the goods and truths as flowing from the Lord into their own affection of evil and the falſe, and thus encourage and confirm their own helliſh ſtate. In order to diſplay the wonders of omnipotence, it is now REVEALED that all both good and bad come into this ſpiritual world; and although the reſidence of both good and bad ſpirits after death, as to it's general view, is one world, yet for the preſervation of order and regulation it is divided as it were into expanſes one below another. The expanſes are ſix; in the higheſt expanſe, which is the third heaven, dwell the celeſtial angels; in the next expanſe, which is the ſecond heaven, dwell the ſpiritual angels; and under theſe, which is in the firſt heaven, dwell the celeſtial and ſpiritual-natural angels. Below theſe dwell the ſpirits of the firſt hell; under theſe the ſatanic ſpirits of the ſecond hell; and

under

under theſe the diabolic ſpirits of the third hell: and the whole ſo orderly and wiſely diſpoſed, that the affections of the evil ſpirits, or the ſpirits of hell, are held under reſtraints by the affections of goodneſs, which are the angels of heaven, the ſpirits of the loweſt hell by the angels of the ſupreme heaven, the ſpirits of the middle hell by the angels of the middle heaven, and the ſpirits of the firſt hell by the angels of the firſt heaven; and from ſuch diſpoſitions of the ſpiritual world, the Lord holds the affections of the whole as it were in an equal balance. Certainly *here* no one can raiſe his contemplating mind, but muſt perceive a wonderful diſplay of divine power, yea, of omnipotence itſelf, and in compariſon of which the omnipotence diſplayed in the natural world appears inconſiderable; and more eſpecially if we extend our thoughts, and conſider that theſe heavens and theſe hells are innumerable, that in each heaven and hell they are diſtinguiſhed into ſocieties and companies according to the general and particular kinds of all the affections, and theſe again in order

and in connection acording to a more near or remote affinity of the affections; and that this is equally done in the hells as in the heavens. What a diſplay of infinite wiſdom, and at the ſame time of infinite power! And that this ordination and regulation can alone proceed from infinite wiſdom and infinite power, will be evident by conſidering that the order and the connection of ſo many affections can be only known to the Lord; and conſequently the arrangement of ſo many various affections as have been men in all worlds from the firſt creation, and as will be hereafter, can alone proceed from an all-wiſe and omnipotent ſource.

That it is divine power alone that is infinite, or in other words that divine power alone is omnipotent, is evident from this ſingle conſideration, that no man, no angel, and no devil has any the leaſt power of themſelves; and if they had any the leaſt power of themſelves, the conſequence would be that heaven muſt fall, hell would become a chaos, and man would unavoid-

 ably

ably perish with them. But this is not the case: the great Jehovah ever has, and still holds the reins in his own hands; and he it is, who, agreeable to the Psalmist, "performs all things for us," without whom we can do nothing, without whom we have not power to will, to think, or to act, except it were given us from above. Hence then let us see that Jehovah, as the mighty creator and upholder of all in heaven, earth, and hell, is the omnipotent.

And that Jehovah is this omnipotent God in the person of Jesus Christ alone, let us hear the Lord Jesus Christ saying, after he had made his Humanity divine, and Jehovah, "All power is given into my hands in heaven and in earth;" and therefore, well might Isaiah prophesy of him and say, "To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God, HERO, the Father of Eternity, and Prince of Peace." And therefore we are not only to consider the Lord as omnipotent in the work of

creation, but alſo in the work of redemption and regeneration: and I take the idea of redemption and regeneration together, becauſe they are but one in reality and in effect, regeneration taking place in conſequence of redemption, and redemption being the ſalvation of the church, in the the general view, whilſt regeneration is the ſame ſalvation as to individuals, and which, as it reſpects the individual, is redemption; for what is redemption but deliverance from the power, the aſſaults, the craft, and the malice of the hells? And however Jehovah, by his coming into the ultimates of Humanity in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, diſplayed his omnipotent arm, and with it wrought ſalvation, and of the people there was none with him, and conquered the overgrown power of the hells, and thus exerted his omnipotent arm to give deliverance to his church; ſo is the ſame proceſs, and the force of the ſame almighty power equally neceſſary to regenerate a ſingle individual, to carry him through the new birth, to tranſlate him out of the kingdom of ſatan into the king-

dom of the Lord God and Saviour Jeſus, whom to know and love is life eternal. Not that we are to ſuppoſe in the leaſt, that the Lord exerts his power contrary to his divine order. Man is made free, and as ſuch all the exertions for regeneration are to preſerve inviolate this freedom; and therefore no farther than to keep the balance even, that the ſide of evil may not preponderate and carry the man headlong down the ſtream without a capability of reflection, was or ever will be his omnipotence exerted: he cannot force, he aſks the heart; and in this operation he is the ſame at one time as at another; in doing this, he is the ſame as well yeſterday as to-day, and to-day as to-morrow, for he is always waiting to be gracious; but in effecting this, man muſt co-operate, the Lord cannot break order to diſplay his omnipotence; for in this caſe he would be the God of confuſion. It is a principal law of divine order, upon which regeneration and ſalvation is founded, that man ſhould do good and believe truth as of himſelf; and it is for this end that the divine omnipotence

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ever did and ever will exert itself; for without this the Lord with all his omnipotence cannot save a single soul. Throw this aside, and see what is the consequence; ye introduce at once *arbitrarious decrees* of salvation and damnation. Horrid thought! The blood chills with the reflection; would a parent be the means of bringing children into the world whom previously he had doomed to torture and destruction? Every parent must say, most surely not. If an earthly parent with all his imperfections, with all his contaminations by the fall, shudders at the idea, and would with horror reject the act, how much more our heavenly father, whose mercy endureth from generation to generation. Nay, how is it possible that such an arbitrarious decree could take place with him who hath declared he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, and who is also declared to be no respecter of persons, and that such as fear God and work righteousness, in every age and in every nation are accepted of him?

I come

I come now to the laſt thing propoſed. I have already obſerved, that the Lord is the life, that he is the uncreate, that he is the infinite, that he is the eternal, and that he is the omnipotent; it now remains that I ſpeak of him as the MAN. Not that I ſuppoſe he is a material man, that he borrows his form and exiſtence from any thing of nature, whether of her elements, her principles, or her elementated principles. No, he is the Divine Man; and he is the Divine Man becauſe in him is the trinity comprehended of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; conſequently in him is the complete eſſence, form, and operation of all eſſences, forms, and operations whatever, of which men are the neareſt, though at beſt but very imperfect images and likeneſſes. The Divine *in him* is what is called the Father; the Divine Human, which is the manifeſtation of the divine in him, *in form*, is the Son; and the proceeding from the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit. And that this divine trinity, anſwering to the human trinity of ſoul, body, and operation of man, is in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt alone,

might

might be proved from the Word, and more eſpecially from ſuch paſſages where the Lord himſelf teacheth us that the Father and himſelf are one, and that the ſpirit of truth, which is the Holy Spirit, ſhould not ſpeak of himſelf, but of the Lord; and alſo from *his* breathing on his diſciples after his glorification, and ſaying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt." The ſame might be proved alſo from many paſſages in the Old Teſtament, where the Lord is called Jehovah, the Son of God, and the Holy One of Iſrael, too numerous to recite. This truth might alſo be proved from the nature of the divine eſſence; for the divine eſſence cannot be, except it contains in itſelf a trinity, and this trinity is the eſſe or *being*, the *exiſting*, and the *proceeding*. The divine *eſſe* would be as nothing if it did not *exiſt*, and whilſt he exiſts, *proceed*, that he may produce images and likeneſſes of himſelf. And where ſhall we find this trinity, thus one in eſſence, but in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt the Lord? for without this trinity Jehovah cannot be, and where this trinity is, there he is in all his fulneſs.

This

This we may alſo illuſtrate from the nature of heaven, ſince *now* it's laws are unfolded. The divine trinity, which is one in eſſence and in perſon, is ſuch in heaven; the Divine which is called the Father, and the Divine Human, which is called the Son, appears there before the eyes of the angels as a ſun; and the Divine proceeding thence as light united to heat, the light is divine truth, and the heat is divine good. Thus may it be manifeſted, that the Divine which is called the Father is the divine eſſe, the Divine Human which is called the Son is the divine exiſting from that eſſe, and the Divine which is called the Holy Spirit is the divine proceeding from the divine *exiſting* and the divine eſſe. This trinity is the Lord in heaven, and there his divine love appears as it's ſun.

Before I proceed, give me leave to anſwer a query that may be propoſed upon what has now been advanced, that one eſſence cannot be by itſelf, but that it alſo includes a trinity in itſelf. It may be aſked, What trinity was in the Lord before he aſ-

ſumed our nature? In anſwer to which, let it be obſerved, that then Jehovah was equally a Man, and there was in him the Divine, the Divine Human, and the Divine Proceeding; but the difference conſiſts in this, that until the Lord came into the world, he was this trinity in all it's firſt principles of Deity, but not in the laſt; he was not divine as to the ultimates of humanity, and which in the ſcriptures, after his complete glorification in putting aſide whatever was maternal and material, is called his fleſh and his bones, as when he told his fainting diſciples, "Handle and ſee, for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones as ye ſee me have;" for theſe were even made divine by the Lord when he was in the world. Thus in Jehovah ever was and is the trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And here let us obſerve, that although the Lord put off from himſelf, even as to his fleſh and bones, every thing that was of a material or ſinful nature, ſtill that does not imply that he has not the ſame form after his glorification as before. Nay, if we take that ſcripture in our eye before quoted,

quoted, it muſt lead us to judge poſitively that he ſtill exiſts in the ſame human form; but now in a glory too high for mortal eyes to ſee; and therefore the ſight manifeſted to the diſciples, was when their eyes, that is, their internal ſpiritual ſight was opened.

To take the ultimates of humanity upon himſelf, was one grand end of Jehovah's coming, that hereby he might not only at that period redeem mankind, but alſo be capacitated for ever to perform the ſame, that thus he might be *the man* in the laſt principles, as he was in the firſt and higheſt.

It is this which the Lord has now ſuperinduced to himſelf, and this now is the Divine Human ſo glorious in all the heavens above, and ſo exalted in his *New Jeruſalem Church* below; and now he can be viſible to his creatures whenever he is graciouſly pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf to them, becauſe like can ſee like. Not that we are in any wiſe to conceive that Jehovah in coming into the world aſſumed a form which he had not before: No, he al-

ways exiſted as the Divine Man, of which his declaring he would make man in his own image and likeneſs is a convincing proof;* but till this period, as obſerved before, he exiſted in his firſt and moſt pure principles, too pure and ſublime to be ſeen by his creatures; and therefore, when the High and Lofty One, who inhabits eternity, had occaſion to condeſcend to manifeſt himſelf to them, he always did it by a form receptive and homogeneous to his own. In the heavens he does it by his angels, and in the world ſometimes by an angel, and ſometimes by prophets, men like ourſelves, who in theſe inſtances repreſent Jehovah himſelf, and indeed whom we find called Jehovah in many parts of the Word, as by Abraham, Lot, and others. But now the chriſtian has no occaſion to view his God in a repreſentative character, he may fix his eye of faith, he may penetrate

* As to it's being ſaid, "Gen. i. 26, "*Let us make man,*" this may as truly be ſpoken by, and at leaſt with as much propriety proceed from the mouth of one God, in whom is the divine trinity, as from one God made up of three diſtinct perſons, each whereof ſingly and by himſelf is God,

trate within the veil, and ſee Jehovah, as far as he can abſtract himſelf from material ideas, in his own form as *the Divine Man*; for the Lord is truly and properly ſuch, yea, he is a man more than the angels themſelves, for although they have a ſoul and a ſpiritual body, ſtill they are not ſo perfectly men, for they have not fleſh and bones as men in the world; and the Lord made even his fleſh and bones divine, in order that he might be capable of being conjoined to men upon earth, as well as he was before to the angels of heaven, that thereby heat and light, love and wiſdom might flow, not as it had done, mediately by the angels into the will and underſtanding of man, but that nothing ſhould prevent it flowing immediately from himſelf in his glorified body, and thus by making his ultimates divine become accommodated to men as well as to angels, and thus have the whole creation under his *immediate* eye.

But although we have been attempting a compariſon between the Lord, angels, and

and men, yet let us conſider that in reality no true compariſon can be made; for with reſpect to the Lord, he is divine in himſelf, and therefore in the very ultimates of his form, or in the ultimates of his Divine Human, he is life in himſelf, as he is in his inmoſt pure eſſential principle; and this he would have us know when he tells us, "that as the Father has life in himſelf, ſo alſo has he given the Son to have life in himſelf;" and that the Lord by the Father means the divine *in himſelf*, will be evident from the genuine truth of that ſcripture, "I and my Father are one," and alſo when he ſays that the Father was in him. Therefore in reality no compariſon can take place, and we do it only for the ſake of illuſtration; but then when we have ſo done, it becomes us to throw the compariſon aſide, and in viewing the Lord with elevated ideas, not only above men with their material and earthly cloathing, but angels alſo with their ſpiritual and ſubſtantial cloathing, ſee him as the Divine Man in himſelf, even as to his divinity and glorified humanity; for in both, as ſoul and

body,

body, he is life in himself, he is the uncreate, the eternal, the infinite, and the omnipotent man, consequently the alone fountain from whence all men and angels derive whatever constitutes them men in time and through eternity. Therefore when we consider God as a man, let us be careful that we consider him not as a material man like one of ourselves, nor as a spiritual man as an angel may be; but let us view him as the Divine Man, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily.

But at the same time let us not be afraid to bring the idea of the Lord in the person of a man home to our minds; for whosoever sees the Lord as *the man*, and Jehovah God in the man, sees him so from heaven's light: to such our Lord's words are truly applicable: "Flesh and blood has not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

The limits of these discourses will not permit me to enumerate the various ideas which the learned, having lost sight of the

Lord

Lord as the divine man, have eſtabliſhed as orthodox concerning God. Some have had the idea of him as they have formed of the univerſe; ſome as of nature in her inmoſt principles and ground; ſome as of a cloud in a certain ſpace of the æther; ſome as of a ray of light, and comparatively but very few of the Lord as *the man*. There are many cauſes which may be aſſigned why the chriſtian world have entertained ſuch ideas as theſe.

One reaſon is, becauſe they have been taught to believe in three divine perſons diſtinct among themſelves; the Father as the inviſible God, and the Son the ſame, whilſt his humanity has been forgot. Paul's words, however plain, have been unnoticed, when he ſays, "The ſecond man (or Adam) is the Lord from heaven, and alſo that it was God that was manifeſted in fleſh, that it was God that was received up to glory in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, even the true God and *very* man.

Another cauſe why the chriſtian world have

have procured to themſelves ſuch ideas of God, is becauſe it has been early impreſſed on their mind that God is a ſpirit, and they have been taught to think of a ſpirit as ſome ſtrange hobgoblin without either form or ſubſtance; when at the ſame time would men exert their powers, would they for themſelves uſe a grain of reaſon, though no larger than a muſtard ſeed, they might know that what is without form and without ſubſtance is not any thing, and that to think of a ſpirit as of air, or as ether, or as wind, being without any boundary, diſſipates itſelf in the mind, and is really nothing at all. But were they to think of ſpirit as a form, and that form the human, then there becomes a determinate object for their faith, and their idea of the Lord would abide.

That the ancients worſhipped the Lord under a viſible human form, and that alſo Jehovah appeared to them as a Man, the Holy Word ſpeaks full to the point; it tells us of Adam as hearing the *voice* of the Lord God *walking* in the midſt of the garden; of Moſes, that the Lord ſpake to

him *face to face*; of Abraham, that he ſaw the Lord amongſt the three angels, who by reaſon of being in a real viſible human form are called three *men*, and one of whom he calls Jehovah; of Lot, that he alſo ſaw two of them. The ſame ſcripture alſo informs us, that the Lord was ſeen as a *Man* by Hagar, as ſuch he was ſeen by Gideon, as ſuch he was ſeen by Joſhua; he was alſo ſeen by Daniel as the Ancient of Days, whoſe garments were white as ſnow, and the *hair* of his *head* like pure wool; and alſo as the Son of Man. He was ſeen by John in the Revelation as the Son of Man *walking* in the midſt of the ſeven golden candleſticks. And that this whom the ancients ſaw, was in reality and truth the Lord Jeſus, he himſelf declares when he ſays, that "Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day, and did ſee it, and was glad." And that it was not the Father but the Son, that is, not the ſoul of the Deity, but the body in whom the ſoul is, that manifeſted himſelf, is, becauſe the divine eſſe which is the Father cannot be ſeen except by the divine *exiſting*, which is the Son, or in other words,

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words, the Divine Human; and the Lord is the divine *exiſting*, in whom is the divine eſſe: thus he was the Divine Man whom the ancients ſaw. And therefore we find that the Word of the ſcriptures may be underſtood even as to the letter, when it ſays, that God has a face, that he has eyes and ears, hands, legs, and feet, a proper diſtinction being made in the mind between his body as being divine, and our's as material; for throughout the whole of his glorified body the divinity has diffuſed itſelf, and in doing which, the hereditary evils and falſe principles derived from the mother were expelled, and conſequently all materiality, yea, and all ſpirituality ſhort of the divine in himſelf. Let us now with thankfulneſs, with adoration, and with love view him, even the Jehovah of the Old Teſtament, and the Jeſus of the New, as the life in himſelf, the uncreate, the eternal, the infinite, the omnipotent, and the man, beſides whom there is none other Lord or God, and to whom it is proper we ſhould now and at all times aſcribe the glory and dominion for ever and ever.

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words, the Divine Human; and the Lord is the divine essence, in whom is the divine effence: thus he was the Divine Man whom the ancients saw. And therefore we find that the Word of the Scriptures may be understood even as to the letter, when it says, that God has a face, that he has eyes and ears, hands, legs, and feet, a proper distinction being made in the mind between his body, which is divine, and ours as material; and that without the whole of his glorified [illegible] Divinity has diffused itself, and in doing which, the hereditary evils and falle principles derived from the mother were expelled, and consequently all materiality, yea, and all spirituality from of the divine in himself. Let us now with thankfulness, with adoration, and with love view him, even the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the Jesus of the New, as the life in himself, the uncreate, the eternal, the infinite, the omnipotent, and the man, besides whom there is none other Lord or God, and to whom it is proper we should now and at all times ascribe the glory and dominion for ever and ever.

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